THE

"HINDU MESSAGE"

A Weekly Review of Indian and World-Problems from the Hindu Standpoint.

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The **Hindu Message** stands for

(1) The Maintenance of British supremacy with self-government for India,

(2) Co-operation with the different communities of India without prejudice to Hindu Dharma,

(3) Education of the Hindus as an integral part of the Indian Nation,

(4) Advancement of Material prosperity on a spiritual basis and

(5) Dissemination of pure Hindu Culture.

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A Vision Of India.

THE HIMALAYAS—VI.

By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L.

The Lord then came a radiant human youth
And said in truthful-seeming words of jest
That God was all unworthy of her quest.
With quivering heart and lips she said "In sooth:
He is the highest, holiest, mightiest, Truth.
Thou sayest ill of Him who is the Best.
When o'er the sea of my soul's dark unrest
Will shine the moon of His sweet grace and ruth?"
At this the youth stood there confessed a God
Before the maiden's bashful down-turned eyes,
And said in words which heavenly comfort brought:
"On God-love's loftiest heights thy soul hath trod.
Thou art the Queen of God and Paradise
And I thy happy slave by penance bought."

R Krishnaswami Sastri

The Hindu Message

THURSDAY EVENING 27, DEC. 1917.

"True Nationalism."

Our Anglo-Indian contemporary, "*The Madras Mail*," in defining "true nationalism" for India in its issue of the 27th November last, holds that "a nationalist must be a person who respcts the peculiar genius of a nation and desires it to have free play as far as may be," and that true nationalism must be "some system unlike any the world knows to-day, to suit her special national genius." He holds, also, that "self-government of the British or Dominion type is thoroughly alien to India," and that "so far, it is desired by an educated minority." Hence it logically follows that this "educated minority" are *not* "true nationalists."

The "peculiar genius" of the Indian nation had developed a polity of its own, and the main features of that polity are still traceable in the works which have survived from antiquity. If foreign visitors, residents, or adventurers had not intruded within these shores and taken advantage of the hospitality shown to them to sow discord among the princes and people of the land, there should have survived to this day a form of self-government *truly national* and "unlike any the world knows to-day." But as a result of the internecine conflicts of the 18th century, the indigenous powers fell irrecoverably into decline, and mostly disappeared. When the British ultimately triumphed, they did not attempt to restore the polity that had fallen or one of the same kind, but established an administration suited to its position in the land and was guided in the framing of it mainly by the principles of government they had developed during their own political and constitutional growth in the West. It is these principles, or those logically developed from them, that are now in the ascendant and form the ideal to which the people of India have to aspire, and do aspire. "The educated minority" have for years laboured to give as much political education as possible to those sections of the masses below them whom they can reach, and to enlist their sympathy and support for the constitutional agitation which they have carried on to attain the goal of self-government. It must thus be clear that the self-government they have aimed at is, *and must necessarily be* "a self-government of the British or Dominion type,"—and not "one unlike any the world knows to-day." It is the only one which can by a natural process, be evolved out of the present system, which is itself of Western origin and character. And it is the one which the British Ministry has *promised* to our people in a manner there is no going back upon and which the Right Hon'ble Mr. Montagu is here to arrange to introduce in a form calculated to satisfy the present needs and aspirations. Where, then is "*the profound inconsistency* of the Europeans who insist that self-government, as understood in the British Isles and the Dominions, should on Nationalist grounds be at once and definitely accepted as the one goal to which Great Britain is to work in India?" In truth, that is the only true nationalism possible now or in

the near future, and any other is false and not to be thought of.

Our contemporary is himself willing to admit that this kind of self-government "must" be conceded, "if and when a large proportion of India's millions are fit for it, and the majority of her sons seriously require it." *First*, as regards fitness, our contemporary has laid down no standard of judgment. Indeed, it is true of politics, as of swimming, that no one can become an expert unless one first practises the art. That the experimental steps already taken have been on the whole successful is conceded on all hands, and this could not be otherwise with a people who, like ourselves, have reared a great civilisation and possess honourable traditions of achievement in all branches of human knowledge and activity. Our contemporary insists that "a large proportion of the population" must be fit before self-government is given. He does not enlighten us as to the *exact proportion* which he wants, and for the obvious reason that no definite statement can be made. All are unanimous in declaring that India is far better equipped for self-government than England at the time of the Reform Bill. Why, then, should not a substantial beginning be made now?

Secondly, it is said that "the majority of her (India's) sons must seriously require it." In reply, we ask,—Did a majority of the male population of England exercise the franchise in 1832, or in 1867, or even in 1884? Before 1832 the number of voters was 300,000; just before the Reform Act of 1867 came into operation, the number was 1,370,000: before the Act of 1884, it was 3 millions; lastly, the passing of that Act raised it to 5 millions, *i.e.*, nearly a fourth of the entire male population. Therefore it cannot be claimed that the total number of electors form "the majority" of the male population. Of course, we know that it will be said that though the electors did not form a majority of the male population, still the latter too *desired* self-government. The answer obviously, is that they took no part in the government, and the government was not *self*-government for them, but only *other*-government. Hence, only the electors can count, when we speak of self-government; and so we are right in saying that the electors did not form a majority of the male population, and that is an effective reply to our contemporary. Thus England had self-government even when only a small fraction were fit for, or required, self-government, and at a time when the literate section of the population did not form a larger fraction of the entire population than we see in India to-day.

Our contemporary then proceeds to state his views (1) on what he calls "the real India," and (2) the goal of self-government it will decide upon when it desires it. As regards the *first* point, our contemporary says:—"The great bulk of the people are still quite incapable of forming an opinion on either the abstract virtues of British and Colonial self-government or its applicability to India; and these are the real people of India, in that they hold far more firmly to distinctively Indian ideas than the average Indian intellectual does." Even in the West, great constitutional lawyers are still often found to discuss the "abstract virtues" of forms of government; and experiments in constitution-making

abound and often assume a practical importance in current affairs. Not only are we here reminded of Carlyle's dictum regarding the people of England as "thirty millions, mostly fools." but a great Englishman has declared that, in all Western forms of government, "the foolish majority raises its will to the dignity of law." Hence, when even constitutional experts cannot agree as to the "abstract virtues" of systems of government, it is no wonder that "the great bulk of the people" in India are unable to do so. The only question, therefore, for consideration is whether they can find or choose reliable national representatives and leaders to look after the interests of the Indian nation of the future. Here they have not been hitherto found wanting, if we may judge by the manner in which those who have so far obtained the elective franchise have been known to use their rights. Every nation or community must be judged by its leading men ; and no Indian Community has been found wanting when asked to choose its leaders,—at least in the great majority of cases.

In this connection, our contemporary hopes for much from "the now very evident desire (among "the real people of India," as he calls them) of differentiating themselves from the Brahminical-legal monopolists of political power,"—he hopes that "the best minds amongst the slowly-rising communities will shy of pursuing the same lines of study and speculation as the Brahmins." In reply to this, we say that the Brahmins have no political power of any kind, much less a monopoly of it ; that the Brahmins form as much a part of the "real people of India" as the Non-Brahmins; and that what God has united, no man can put asunder. In light and shade, in sunshine and frost, the Brahmins and Non-Brahmins have pulled well together for ages, and will surely do the same in all the ages to come. When our contemporary speaks of the "now very evident desire (among certain people) of differentiating themselves" from the Brahmins and their Non-Brahmin comrades, he evidently refers to the microscopic minority of Non-Brahmins who have been set up by interested men to oppose Indian Constitutional reform and who have been disowned by the majority of Non-Brahmins everywhere,—both in the towns and the villages of South India. So there can be no hope of being able to put back the clock of Indian progress through help from that quarter, and our contemporary must possess his soul in patience and resolve firmly to face the situation and to co-operate with our people and their leaders in making the future Government scheme, whatever it may be, a success.

Secondly, our contemporary hopes that when "the real India" of his imagination resolves to declare the kind of self-government suited to it, it will "work out some system unlike any the world knows to-day, to suit her special national genius, but will desire the retention of certain British authorities to hold the balance between her many races and creeds." Here our contemporary betrays—without the least justification, as we think—his fear lest the Indian leaders of to-day, in their efforts to secure self-government at an early date and the first substantial steps towards it at once, are actuated by the desire to get rid of all British authority or influence

in the Government of India. Our leaders aim at no such thing, but rather at the full and cordial co-operation of the representatives of all Indian and Anglo-Indian Communities in the task and mission of building up an Indian Nation worthy of its place among the self-governing Communities of this great and glorious Empire.

Responsible Government.

Mr. Curtis' Letter—I.

The memorable announcement of the 20th August was to the effect that the goal of British policy was "the progressive realisation of responsible government in India, as an integral part of the British Empire." Mr. Curtis says that by this announcement the National Congress "got something else and indeed something more than they asked for." To this we cannot agree, What the Congress asked for was "Self-government in India at an early date." Now, self-government is nothing more, and nothing less, than "responsible government." For, autocracies and aristocracies have passed away from the world never again to return to it. Government by the people lives as a fact or as an ideal,—as an ideal where it is not a fact. The whole people can assemble for purposes of government only in city-states, and not in big or nation-states. Hence the representative form of government has become inevitable in all modern states where popular control over government is a reality, and all representative government is, in more or less degree, responsible government. Self-government and responsible government are, in essence, the same, and responsibility commonly lies to the people of the country for whom the government lives and works. At present the Executive in India is responsible to the people, Parliament and Ministry of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland,—*directly* to the Ministry through the Secretary of State who is a member of the Cabinet, *indirectly* to the people and Parliament. Hence we are styled—or rather degradingly branded—as a *dependency*. A government like the one now prevailing in India has become an anachronism and a snare,—for it ignores the Indian people and their leaders and their views of policy. If the Indians were aimless, voiceless, and disunited, as they were 30 or 40 years back, a government from outside, but one determined to preserve order and peace while keeping the scales even between all persons and sections of the community, would continue to be the best possible for us, as it has been in the past. But we ardently desire to be placed in an honourable position of equality with the other self-governing dominions of the Empire. We have also undergone the probation of many years of training, of discipline, of preparation, and now of co-operation with all other nations and communities within the Empire in the sacrifices, sufferings, dangers, and glories of an unexampled process of warfare against the common foe. It is thus no longer possible or proper to refuse to us the status of equality with them to which for years we have persistently, passionately, and patriotically aspired. That means the creation of a new machinery and new powers of government which would raise the Indian people to the same status of freedom which the Colonies and Dominions enjoy under British suzerainty. Self-government,

then, comes to be synonymous with Responsible Government, and the Government of Mr. Lloyd-George is entitled to the eternal glory of rising above all paltry and petty considerations to a true perception of the needs and ideals of the present age when they made the announcement of the 20th August last. Mr. Curtis, though he contradicts himself in saying so, is right in saying of the Ministry of Mr. Lloyd George that "Responsible government must have been used in the place of self-government with a full knowledge of the meaning it conveyed." To deny it is to assume that the British Government is as irresponsible as its critics themselves who are actuated by the love of ascendancy natural to a class which has reigned supreme in India and developed into a new order or group of Indian society known as "sun-dried bureaucrats."

The practical questions now are,—To what assembly is the Indian government to be made responsible, and what is to be its constitution? What does responsibility mean? Sir James Meston has recently spoken of "responsibility through an elected legislature to the people." What is to be the people, *i.e.*, the electorate, and who are to be its representatives? On all these questions the attention has been concentrated in recent discussions all over the land. Again, there is the important question,—By what successive stages are we to reach the goal of full responsibility of government to the people? Mr. Curtis asks the question,—"Why cannot the final power of removing and replacing these executives be transferred at one stroke from the Secretary of State to Indian electorates?" The announcement of the 20th August contains the statement that the British Government and the Government of India must be the judges of the time and measure of each advance, and they must be guided by the co-operation received from those upon whom new opportunities of service will thus be conferred and by the extent to which it is found that confidence is reposed in their sense of responsibility. Mr. Curtis interprets this to mean that "the British government at the moment of announcement sees no electorates to whom it can transfer the responsibility which now rests on itself." Hence he says that "its immediate task is to develop such electorates in India, and in such a manner that it is possible to test the reality of the development." We cannot agree to this view. We consider that Mr. Curtis is wrong in thinking that the British Cabinet's pronouncement of the 20th August was chiefly concerned with the question of "removing and replacing the executive in India." Nor do we think that the British Cabinet can ever transfer "the responsibility which now rests on itself" altogether to the Executive or the Legislative Council in India, or even to the electorate in India. The British Cabinet, at present, is *ultimately* responsible for the position of affairs in the Empire, and this it cannot transfer to anybody in India, or elsewhere in the Dominions of the Empire. The British Cabinet had before them only the task of giving expression to its appreciation of the position and aspiration of India in the Empire and of its services to that Empire; and the announcement was made that India is to have "responsible government," and that forthwith steps are to be taken to make a

start which would lead to "responsible government" at no distant date. Mr. Montagu's mission is to determine the nature of that start when the time comes to make it.

We have indicated above the nature of the questions he has to deal with. They are three in number,—(1) the powers of the New Indian "responsible government,"—*i.e*, the extent of the responsibility that is to be conferred on the Indian government that is to be ; (2) the constitution of the electorate ; (3) the constitution of the legislative assembly. We shall follow Mr. Curtis' views and schemes as they develop themselves in successive letters in regard to these and other topics.

Notes and Comments.

A writer in the *Quarterly Review* for January 1917—Mr. W. C. D. Whetham—writes as follows:—"Early marriages benefit the population in two ways. They increase the number of years of potential parenthood, and thus, in natural circumstances, the number of children in the family. And they also shorten the interval between succeeding generations and thus bring the new crop of children sooner into the world." Here is the justification of the holy Rishis who founded the Hindu civilisation. The value of early marriages will be great in Europe after the present war. Hitherto the European idea has been that marriage is a nuisance, as it means the curtailment of freedom and the intolerable burden of the care of children. It was this idea that inspired the notorious Knowlton pamphlet (now withdrawn from publication) and led to the memorable litigation in which the late Charles Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant figured as defendants. In recent years, the declining birth-rate has been the subject of much sentimental weeping and gnashing of teeth in France, and to some extent even in England, but the prejudice against lawful wedlock and its troublesome consequences has remained. But after the terrible destruction of adult life in the war now being waged with relentless and unexampled ferocity, early marriage will be needed and is advocated by the writer in the "Quarterly Review" above-named in order "to recuperate the ravages of war in the upper and middle classes." He says that "the marriages of men of twenty-three or twenty-four should be warmly encouraged." India, we must not fail to remember, is a tropical country where men ripen earlier and decay faster, and so there is not the least harm in our men marrying (in the real sense of the term) at 21 or 22, and that is what usually happens. Manu recommends that Indian marriages—*i.e.*, betrothals—should ordinarily take place at 24 for men, but they may take place earlier too. We thus see that the wisdom of the Indian sages is justified by the sound sense and the lesson of present-day experience in Europe.

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All public men have accepted the principle of communal representation. The Brahmins, as one community, are to have their own representatives. So far well and good. But in all Non-Brahman Conferences where schemes of representation are framed,—as, for example, the Tinnevelly Non-Brahmin Group Conference—it is stated that "all those who *claim* to be Brahmins should be voters." This virtually amounts to the denial of any representatives to those who have been *recognised* as Brahmins and who cannot therefore feel the need to "*claim*" to be Brahmins. Nothing can be easier than to *claim* to be Brahmins. In recent years, the *claim* has been advanced by various communities such as Sowrashtras, Visvakarmas, Vahnikulas, &c. The "holy thread" is worn more largely than ever in these days, and there is nothing to prevent any body from *claiming* to be Brahmins. If a *mere claim* is to confer the legal right to vote, these new claimants can easily form the majority. The effect will be to completely swamp those who have been *recognised* as Brahmins from the remotest times and on whose behalf, as the class possessing the Shastraic right to the rendering of the spiritual

ministration needed by the rest of the Hindu Community, the men of the past ages have created numerous religious trusts and endowments and conferred gifts of all kinds. It is only the Smarthas, Vaishnavas, and Madhvas, and also the few Adi Saivas that have been recognised as Brahmins in the past and for whose benefit the endowments and charities of all kinds above mentioned have been made. These alone are entitled to be included in the future Brahmin electorate, and not those who "claim" to be Brahmins. The fact that these Brahmins are, several of them, employed in various secular avocations to-day does not make them cease to be Brahmins. For secular employments are *not closed* by the shastras to the Brahmins but are permitted to them at all times for the gaining of livelihood, and so they continue Brahmins to this day, and are alone entitled to vote as Brahmins,—not those who "claim" to be Brahmins.

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Mr. Jinarajadasa said at the Gokhale Hall, Madras on the 11th Istant :—"About the year 1909, Mrs. Annie Besant had made a pronouncement that before very long there would come to the world a great teacher with his message to the whole world. Since then, she has been repeating that statement, and she had a reputation to stake, as she was known in the four continents as a great spiritual teacher." He then proceeded to ask them "to prepare beforehand to accept Him." It seems to us absurd and foolish that men should "accept" a teacher before knowing what he teaches. And then Mrs. Besant's "pronouncement" on a matter is no guarantee that she will long stick to it. She has no doubt a great "*reputation to stake*," but she stakes it on the advocacy of successive causes, and her gains and losses therefrom come upon the world with such lightning rapidity that one stands bewildered by the kaleidoscopic marvels of her unique and erratic course in the life she has lived. Mr. Jinarajadasa and numerous other followers certainly admire and some even deify her as a "great spiritual teacher." This is certainly a great credit to her. But we can prove that many of her interpretations of Hinduism are manifestly faulty, and she herself once avowed that "her experiences with Mr. Leadbeater on the higher planes were due to glamour." Lastly, why is this particular time chosen by Mr. Jinarajadasa to revive Mrs. Besant's old "pronouncement" of the year 1909 regarding the "coming of a great teacher to the world." Her persistent advocacy of Home Rule, her recent internment, and her election to the Presidentship of the Congress have made her the most prominent character to-day on the stage of Indian public life. So, her followers evidently think that the revival of this old "pronouncement" of hers regarding the coming avatar or teacher will easily gain credence and acceptance among the Hindu public. Again, we should like to know whether her two Brahmin wards, the sons of Mr. Narayaniah, have completed their studies in England. Is Alcyone soon to return to India? We fear that Mr. Jinarajadasa is simply flogging a dead horse. Theosophic Avatarism is dead for ever and ever.

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The Twentieth Century, too, has its Don Quixote tilting at the windmills. Mr. George Joseph, M.A., Barrister-at-law is *our* illustrious Don, and Brahminism is one of the Indian giants he is fighting gallantly, even heroically. For, as President of the Non-Brahmin Group Conference at Tinnevelly, he said :—"The Bureaucrat in administration and the Varnashrama Dharmist in Hindu Society are spiritually kin. The bureaucracy should bind itself with Brahminism in hoops of steel. We who fight for equality and responsible government have against us Bureaucracy and Brahminism." Mr. Joseph is a Christian and has nothing whatever to do with Hindu society or Brahminism. He despises us as idolators and pantheists in religion, and the sacred authorities whom we accept and adhere to are of no significance and value for him. No Brahmin can ever cross his path in social or religious life. Moreover, in politics to-day, he himself acknowledges that it is "the Non-Brahmins that have rallied to the support of political Brahminism,"

while "Brahmins have carried aloft the banner of responsible government." He further says,—"As for myself, I have no doubt or anxiety for the future." Why Mr. Joseph, M.A., Barrister-at-law should tilt at what he calls "brown bureaucracy" seems inexplicable, unless it be that he is resolved to snatch away his laurels from the heroic and valiant Knight of La Mancha. May the Lord Jesus and all the saints of Christendom find this contemporary Don of ours a fitting future of worthy service as the chivalrous champion and Knight-errant of "equality and responsible government." It is the Brahmin's appointed function to invoke the blessings of Isvara and the Devas. But we must not forget that Mr. Joseph is a Christian, and so we invoke the Christian God or Incarnation on his behalf. Our excuse is that, as the Christian calls the Bible his *Veda*, so we, for the purpose now in our view and so far only, take it on ourselves to send up an invocation to Jesus on Mr. Joseph's behalf. It may be that a Heathen's prayer is rejected. But the Hindu is both tolerant and resourceful under the stress of unforeseen exigency.

The Presidential Address at the Non-Brahmin Conference at Tinnevelly.

(By R. Ganapathy Aiyar B.A., B.L.)

According to Mr. Joseph, the difference between autocracy and democracy is only an "irresolvable question of faith or dogma," "Absolute monarchies have reared great civilizations, century after century," "the problem of statesmanship is the same for all the Indian Communities; the possibility of economic rescucitation is the same for all; the disabilities under which we live, and which we seek to remove, are fundamentally the same; and the final redemption, when it should come, cannot be essentially different *for the great Religious Associations*". These are some of his premises and conclusions, jutting out prominently from the midst of an array of violent abuses showered over the Brahmins' head and from the midst of a number of inconsistent and ill-digested assertions and dogmas that fill up the pages of his Presidential Address. He further explains that "Home Rule means *in politics* government responsible to the duly elected representatives of the people, and through them finally to the people themselves"; and the Brahmins have long accepted this position also, though it is not necessary to limit the explanation in that way. Mr. Joseph was invited to occupy the Presidential Chair of a *Political Conference* in opposition to Dr. Nair and his party and to support the Congress scheme in the framing of which the Brahmins are supposed to have a large share. When there is thus a complete agreement between him and the Brahmins in the Political field, it is inexcusable that he should have gone out of his way and disgraced the Presidential Chair by launching a virulent diatribe against the Brahmins and "unscrupulous Brahmin Officials" in their absence and unnecessarily stir up class hatred. In his view, "right through all the centuries, people have made a mess of the things that make for liberty, self-respecting citizenship and the highest type of manhood," *whatever these vague words may mean.* He shows the cloven feet of the Christian, when he says "In social arrangements (under Home Rule) caste will die and there will be equality and freedom of opportunity; in religion, a priestly order will vanish and man will be given the liberty of himself facing and dealing with the God of his faith or imagination." One wonders what kind of religion this may be! But, what has religion and its social arrangement to do with the address on the Political platform? Why should the speaker, chosen for political purposes, abuse the opportunity and suddenly change into a religious and social preacher? Home Rule or Self-Government has been accepted to be better than Good Government; but, *why should it take that particular form which was wrought in the seething furnace of decaying France?* Why should the social and religious arrangements that enured and strengthened the Hindu Society for thousands of years be also brought to the furnace and destroyed?

The reasons for this abuse of opportunity are not far to seek. Mr. Joseph began his Presidential Address by stating that " It is not without significance that their choice of President should have fallen upon a member of the Christian Community", and that " the spirit of liberty working through the Indian peoples for the shaping of a new social economy and a deepened sense of brother-hood is essentially Christian and, therefore, demands the contribution of the *Christian experience for its richest operation.*" Well 1917 years have nearly passed for the operation of this *Christian experience* and this supposed Christian spirit of liberty and brother-hood. Of these, nearly 1790 years passed away with no claim to any such liberty or brotherhood. Whatever might have been the good things taught by Jesus Christ to the fishermen of Galilee, the Crusade, the Inquistion, the Auto-de-fei, the Religious wars of Europe, the most inhuman slave trade, the extermination of the aborginal races of America and Africa and hundreds of other national crimes are all written large in blooodish red in the pages of history and disgrace the Golden Book of God. "Between the Rome of heathen Caesar and the Rome of Christian Peter, which was crueller? Which was worse?" It is well known that " Christian love among the churches look the twin of heathen hate" and "Christian conquerors took and flung the conquered Christians into flames." " Have the Christians grown at last beyond the passions of the primal clan"? If any doubt remains, look at the present war and diplomacy in Europe, a daily tale of enormous woe and destruction. One may even venture to say that the so-called Christian brotherhood never extended beyond the Christian fold or beyond the purpose of militant propagation, religious or political, as in China or Japan. In fact, if Europe progressed, it was in spite of the benumbing effects of Christianity.

The oppression of the Christian churches, the piercing darts of Pascal's letters, the thunder of Voltaire, the rack-rent of the land-lords, and the consequent agrarian disaster, the cupidity for power and several other similar causes unsettled the society and brought about the most destructive French Revolution and out of the ashes of its burning fields rose the desperate cry of " Liberty, equality and fraternity,"—a cry that could not even survive to the time when Mazzini planned the freedom of Italy. This "new Illumination of Liberty, equality and brotherhood" flashed for a while, like a wil-o-the-wisp, through the inner sense of Europe and soon passed and died away; and the French Revolution also proved a failure. Why? The method of retaining in man these heavenly qualities was not known. How can sober facts be laughed to scorn by hundred texts? How can you "tumble Nature heel over head, and set the feet above the brain and swear the brain is in the feet?" It has been reserved only to the ancient people of this sacred country to teach the World how best to preserve these heavenly sparks of fire in the *pravritti marga* of the busy work-a-day world, without being consumed by them: "for freedom is also free to slay herself" and "demos ends in working its own doom". Brahminism has been always upholding law and order in the past and wherever sound law and order is kept up Brahminism will prevail.

To Mr. Joseph, it is " a strange paradox, that the men who are born Brahmins are asking for application of anti-Brahmin democratic principles and that the Brahmins have carried aloft the banner of responsible government; *whether they have not committed political suicide as Brahmins is one of the problems of the immediate future.*" Mr. Joseph is very frank indeed. Well, to a Christian who is nursed to believe the beginning of the world to be not beyond 6,000 years, whose conception does not extend beyond the narrow ken of the garden of Eden and the Satan therein, whose sympathies are limited to the descendants of Adam and Eve, who is not restrained by anything higher than the fear of purgatory and hell, such a behaviour of the Brahmins will ever remain a paradox and a puzzle till his Day of Judgment, and, in his pettymindedness, he may wish the effacement of the Brahmins off the Earth. But to the Brahmin, who has unravelled the mysteries of life and death and adopted the means of

attaining liberty even from them, who has laid down the means of obtaining equality even with God himself, whose far-seeing vision has harmonised the brother-hood of every imaginable thing and who has to pray every day, not for his daily bread, but for the welfare of all the living things, such a suicidal behaviour is not a paradox. The vision of his duty throughout the long long ages of the past has been to seek the welfare of all living things and it still remains the same, however much it may be dimmed by the changes and passions of the hour. If the Brahmins were selfish and looked to their own benefits, they might have with much greater advantage, "bound themselves with the white Bureaucracy in hoofs of steel."

If the ancient Indian culture and the landmarks of the country be swept away by inciting the Non-Brahmins, India will undoubtedly be an easy prey for the spread of Christianity. That is the way in which Mr. Joseph has conceived his scheme of Indian Reforms and the unwary Non-Brahmins are unconsciously getting into the snare. That is why this young knight-errant of Indian Christendom, hailing from Travancore, while attacking the "White Bureaucracy" (consisting of anti-democratic Christians), fights the wind-mills on the way, like the Don Quixote of old, and runs amok against an imaginary "Brown Bureaucracy" (admitted to consist of suicidal democratic Brahmins), and even the cosmopolitan character of Theosophy affords no protection, "*in this bout of abstract reasoning*", (not a drunken bout, let us be consoled) and further lays his lance at rest to pierce the Native States, not even sparing the sacred memories of the dead. By all means, let him "salute Dr. Nair" (even prostrate before him) as the guru of this pastime of chivalry "in pouring the vials of his wrath on the Brahmin": But let the salute or prostration be done in private, not in public, before the Non-Brahmins of Tinnevelly, who may be expected to have a wish to live in peace and harmony with their Brahmin neighbours. Already Mr. Norton had to admonish a section of them from making laughing stock of themselves, in supporting "the White Bureaucracy" out of antipathy to the Brahmins. Why should another section of them require the admonition of probably a Gandhi to put down the Brahmin hatred caused by Mr. Joseph? That is the danger of the Non-Brahmins putting themselves under the lead of Christians. Like the Non-Brahmins of Tanjore District that met at Thiruthuraipoondi, they are also sensible people desiring to live in peace and *love their neighbours* but for the intervention of the parental solicitude of Christians.

But let our Non-Brahmins take to heart the lesson furnished by the history of Japan. When a great Civil war was raging amongst the several clans in Japan, in the year **1848**, the American Naval Commander Perry was waiting with open arms in the Japanese harbour, with the American Warships, (like our obliging Christian friend) ready to assist one side or the other: but, for a long time, both parties went on without the help of the outsider, till at a last one party was driven to despair, and sought his help but, soon rejected with scorn the profferred help so gladly given, owing to the taunts of the other party and preferred rather to be defeated. But for this good sense and manliness, Japan would have been a part of the United States long long ago.

Only four years ago, when another Group Conference of the same Districts, but consisting of both Brahmins and Non-Brahmins, was entrusted to both Mr. Joseph and myself as secretaries, Mr Joseph did not evince any desire to attend even the business meetings and absolutely refrained from even attending the Conference even while he was present in town. But, that was a time when our Christian friends were not bold enough to announce in public the cherished object of "*ending the (supposed) Brahmin Supremacy and achieving it soon by breaking up caste.*" But now, the apple of discord thrown by Mr. Montagu, is the proper time for the Priams of Troy to see the several parts of the Hindu body corporate in all their underlying nakedness and raise their pistol at the head. The passion and confusion, now raging from the feet to the head of the country, is the

proper time for young buds to shoot up in varied colours. Let us now see what a Christian Barrister of Tinnevelly of advanced age and ripened experience, who has travelled much in England and Europe and discussed political questions with eminent statesmen, who was a Home Ruler long before Home Rule was thought of by the Indian Public, has to say on the subject, after working in the political arena for more than 30 years. This respected veteran Congressman, Mr. P. Peter Pillai, in a letter dated 18-9-1916 to the President of the Oudh Talukdars' Association of Lucknow, writes as follows :—"I have contributed about 100 articles on famines in India and about 50 on the elevation of the so called "depressed classes." In these, I discussed the labour question which affects most materially the landed community and agriculture. The labour problem is almost identical with the problems affecting the *much misunderstood and misrepresented caste system.* There has been a movement for sometime to start and work a Varnasrama Dharma Conference. In May last, one such Conference was held here, a copy of the proceedings of which I enclose herewith. It has been proposed to hold a Conference for All-India at Lucknow *and the people in these parts will be very happy*, if arrangements can be made to hold a Conference of the kind at Lucknow for All-India. It need not identify itself with any present Conferences and Congress. An early reply will oblige." Such is the wisdom and tolerance of age, experience and sober thought.

It is a matter for great satisfaction that the keynote of the Welcome address of the Reception Committee Chairman was far different and sober, without being disgraced by any of the ill-conceived hatred of the Brahmins. The Christian President might have taken a clue from him when he advised that "there was no good in indulging in mere abuse or using violent language": but that was too good or too late to benefit the President who had his Address already printed and who had probably a different purpose in view. It has come to my knowledge that the attack on the Brahmins was deliberately made by him.

Our only prayer is that there should be peace all round and good will between all the Communities, adhering to their respective duties and enriching the Motherland as in the past in varied ways.

Pencillings by the way—VIII.

By S. P. Thiagarajan.

When we maintain that the ancient Hindu polity was essentially democratic, and are asked to demonstrate it, we have to face some obstacles, formidable for the moment. There are a set of critics who want us to explain why a democracy—genuine, as we call it—"based on a stable social order enthroned on a spiritual basis" should have decayed. The critics of this stamp obviously labour under an illusion. We must remind them that it is absurd to confound stability with force or the greatness of a thing with its duration. And in order that a genuine democracy, like the ancient Hindu polity, should subsist in one country of the world, it would be necessary that institutions, of a similar tendency though not of the same kind, should be introduced into all the other nations. It is only an application of this truth when we maintain that though Dharma has its ebb and flow, it is never destroyed. The other set of critics have apparent justice on their side. The materials of Indian history are in a most chaotic state. As one of the choice spirits of this age once wrote to the present writer, such of these materials as are available have rarely been worked at with a free and open mind by Indians unspoilt by the craze for Westernisation or the still more degrading desire to be pat on the back by some Western scholar. Under these circumstances they who maintain the essential democratic nature of our ancient polity have only tradition to go upon. Nor need this be a matter of regret. Tradition is only the concretisation of a nation's culture and history; one may always depend upon its luminosity. The reader will be so good as to note the essential scope and aim of these notes, so often adverted to. This said, I proceed with the less hesitation.

The most serious as well as the most pusillanimous charge levelled against the Hindu polity is that the laws were dictated by an interested oligarchy. It has been objected that the selfish aims of a particular caste were furthered by those laws. What these selfish aims are and how the law furthered them has never been demonstrated by these sapient critics. The whole clamour in this presidency at least illustrates the art of ushering in new parties in our political world. A political aspirant in modern India begins by discriminating his own political interest; he then contrives to discover some doctrine or some principle which may suit the purposes of a new association, having previously calculated on those interests which may be collected around and amalgamated with his ; and which he adopts in order to bring forward his party and to secure his popularity. One of their chief planks is a persistent vilification of the lawgivers of the race. Of our laws, the latest Convocation Orator says:—"A system of law, beyond the comprehension of our Western customs, allowed every man to rise in his own sphere up to the highest steps of fortune without, however, making it possible for him to overstep the bounds of a social order where covetousness and rivalries are the first results of liberty."

Says a distinguished and authoritative writer:—"In the consideration of laws a distinction must be carefully observed between the end at which they aim and the means by which they are directed to that end, between their absolute and their relative excellence. If it be the intention of the legislator to favour the interests of the minority at the expense of the majority and if the measures he takes are so combined as to accomplish the object he has in view with the least possible expense of time and exertion, the law may be well drawn up although its purpose be bad; and the more efficacious it is, the greater is the mischief which it causes." Judged by this test, the Hindu legislators come out of the ordeal in shining colours. I shall, in a minute, shew the evils of democratic legislation as well as those of legislation by an aristocracy and show also how the ancient legislators were able to steer clear of both these evils. It is sufficient to remark here, without going into elaborate arguments, that the single end at which the ancient Hindu legislators aimed was that each soul of the great Community should be able to realise God and the serenity of an abiding Peace. With this end in view, which is surely the end aimed at by all men of whatever religion, they laid down that purposive organisation which, spite of many rents and defects, still has its centre safe. The laws they laid down were no doubt the work of an aristocracy—but they were not an aristocracy of wealth, nor even of mere intellect. But I am anticipating.

The mutability of the laws is the greatest evil of democratic legislation. But they generally tend to promote the welfare of the greatest possible number, for they emanate from the majority which, though liable to error, cannot have an interest opposed to its own advantage. Moreover the poor being always the majority, the interests of property are likely to suffer by legislation. On the other hand, when an aristocracy makes the laws, the tendency is for wealth to be concentrated in the hands of a minority. It therefore holds good, as a general proposition, that democratic legislation is useful to a greater number of citizens than aristocratic legislation. This is however the sum-total of its advantages. Against this must be put the truth that "aristocracies are infinitely more expert in the science of legislation than democracies can ever be." Aristocratic legislation proceeds with the dexterity of art; it understands how to make the collective force of all its laws converge at the same time to a given point. The laws of democracies on the other hand says a learned writer, "are almost always ineffective or inopportune."

Let us look, now, at the Hindu legislation. Mutability indeed has never been charged against it; on the other hand its very lack of this quality makes our pseudo-reformers indignant. The aims of the Hindu polity have been set forth above and the laws and the social organisation were framed to meet this end. The laws

themselves were laid down by our seers in their state of *Samadhi.* Men like the seers of old, belong to all classes of society, though as I have shown in an earlier note, they constitute an order by themselves. They were not the aristocracy of mere intellect that gives the laws in so many countries of the West, nor did they constitute a hereditary aristocracy of the kind met with in the West. Indeed the whole tendency of Hindu legislation has been subversive of the growth of an aristocracy such as we see in the West. I refer to the law of descent, of partible inheritence. I cannot here refer to all the consequences that flow from this purely civil law. I will content myself with remarking that its influence, operating on generations unborn, has ground down the bulwarks of the influence of wealth to the fine and shifting sand which is the basis of democracy. Nevertheless, they, the seers of old, found an aristocracy of a unique character. They possessed a self-control which protected them from the errors of temporary excitement. Not being tied down by any mundane interests, and having in view the goal of human life, they laid down, in their superconscious states of *Samadhi* the laws of life most in accord with that grand conception of the end of the race.

The fact that these seers were members of the highest caste has been adroitly handled by Brahmana-phobes of these days. This need not detain us long. The seers, having risen above temporalities, could not be affected by their *Purvasramas* and even if they should be—a supposition so derogatory to their Rishi-hood, which we are absolutely unwilling to grant even for the sake of argument—the fact that they were simply law-givers, who had no right of administering the same, which in every case was left to the castes concerned or affected, should surely knock the bottom from under our critic's position.

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The Bhagavad Gita

With an English Exposition

By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri B. A. B. L.

(The substance of the lectures now being delivered at the Students' Sanatana Dharma Sabha, Trichinopoly.)

INTRODUCTORY.

(*continued*)

I have stated in my work on *Sir Rabindranath Tagore* about this matter thus: "Our sages declare that every man must begin his spiritual progress by service of humanity; that the attainment of illumination by renunciation, knowledge, and love is an end in itself; and that even after illumination the wise man should do his duties in a spirit of detachment and dispassion so that others might not be led astray by the wise men giving up the performance of duties. They declare further that in the case of the very few who have risen to the highest raptures of love and wisdom and are immersed in bliss no worldly action can be expected. What action do the votaries of the gospel of work ask them to do? If they pass through a place they spread a paradise of love about them, and whoever is fortunate enough to breathe for a moment in the divine and luminous atmosphere that they carry about them feels a sudden conversion of the heart. A compassionate glance from their eyes is worth a thousand religious lectures. How few, how very few, can be such souls? In the case of those who are only travellers on the path towards light, the performance of duties is exacted by the sacred law, though they will do their duties in a spirit of detachment and dispassion and as an act of worship of the Lord saying and feeling Sri Krishnarpanam astu (श्रीकृष्णार्पणमस्तु)—I dedicate it to Sri Krishna. Through law the soul rises to wisdom and love and through wisdom and love it rises to the Bliss of the Lord."

Mr. Tilak in his *Gita Rahasya* says that he bases his doctrine that *Karmayoga* is the final goal of life according to the Gita on the verse which tells us what are the means of finding out the highest essence of a work.

उपक्रमोपसंहारावभ्यासोऽपूर्वता फलम् ।
अर्थवादोपपत्ती च लिङ्गं तात्पर्यनिर्णये ॥

(The beginning, the end, the matter repeated, the original elements, the goal, the accessory matters dealt with, and the elements of logical discussion are the seven means of ascertaining the purport of a work).

No one can have any quarrel with this method. It is in his application of it and in the inferences drawn by him from such application that the erroneous elements have come in. It is true that the Gita is addressed to a warrior and that it finally overcomes his disinclination to action. Is that a reason for saying that every one should do action irrespective of his *Varna*, *asrama*, *sraddhâ* or *Vâsanâs*? It is no doubt true that it is the *Upanishad* of the Mahabharata which describes the *Dharmas*. But does not the Mahabharata describe both *Pravritti Dharmas* and *Nivritti Dharmas* and do not the heroes of the *Mahabharata* finally turn their back upon the over-enjoyed pleasures of life and attain to the highest altitudes of renunciation? The test of *abhyâsa* also has been unfairly applied by Mr. Tilak. Even supposing that the Lord again and again reverts to Arjuna's duty to fight, how does that injunction apply to all irrespective of time and place and circumstance and environment? If the *apûrvata* test is to be literally applied, it will be the duty of every man to *fight*. The Lord did not tell Arjuna to administer the law, or to relieve suffering, or to lead people in the paths of righteousness but to fight. Again, the Verse

सर्वोपनिषदो गावो दोग्धा गोपालनन्दनः ।

पार्थो वत्सः सुधीर्भोक्ता दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत् ॥

shows to us that the Gita is a scripture given to all and not to the fighter alone. Further, the injunctions to attain to the summits of devotion and contemplation are not really less frequent than the injunction to fight. The test of फलं also has not been properly applied by Mr. Tilak. The fruit is the attainment of God and not doing the work of fighting:

मत्कर्मकृन्मत्परमो मद्भक्तः संगवर्जितः ।

निर्वैरः सर्वभूतेषु यः स मामेति पाण्डव ॥

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।

मामेवैष्यसि सत्यं ते प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे ॥

सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।

अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥

It is not possible to take up the other tests for full consideration here. The test of अपूर्वता also cannot bear the strain sought to be put upon it by Mr. Tilak. The Lord says that he is giving to the world what He had declared to the world at the beginning of creation and which it had forgotten. The really original element in the Gita is its grand synthesis. Mr. Tilak's view that in those pre-printing days no one said or wrote anything unless he had something original to say is to say the least of it more amusing than conclusive. What has the question of printing to do with this matter? It was in the pre-printing days that the epic of Mahabharata—much bigger in size than many modern poems put together came to be written. In spiritual matters the entire truth has been given by the *Veda* and who—be he God Himself—can improve upon it and give us something absolutely original? He can only bring before our gaze the radiance of illumination eternally shining there. In the very same way Mr. Tilak has misapplied the tests of *arthavada* and *Upapatti*. He has done well in pointing out the worthlessness of Western ethical systems based on utilitarianism, evolution or intuitionism. "The greatest good of the greatest number" is a mere intellectual bubble, because, does "number" include savages and brutes? Who can find out what conduces to the greatest good of the greatest number? If two persons differ as to such greatest good, who is to decide between them? This theory gives no prominence to the element of motive in action. Suppose the promoters of a railway company bribe the authorities to lay a railway line, that action secures the good of the people. Is it therefore moral? The evolutionary and intuitional systems of ethics also are unsatisfactory and illogical. The real glory of man is not the *will to live* or *the will to power* but the *will to attain the highest perfection* which is expressed by the term *Mumukshutva*. No system of ethics is sound which is not based on a sound system of metaphysics. The real defect in Mr. Tilak's method is that in his attempt to socialise

all spiritual activities there is the danger of his losing sight of the higher work of our spiritualising all social activities till in the end the spirit is left face to face with God and in full possession of the priceless and eternal treasure of God-realisation. It is not possible to take up here for discussion all the ideas mentioned in Mr. Tilak's voluminous book. They may be taken up later on from time to time whenever necessary. The supreme importance of *Karma*—action whether for legitimate gratification of legitimate desires or in a spirit of renunciation and detachment and dispassion—has been recognised by all. The real difference is as to whether it is the final end and aim of life. Already India has been torn by empty futile discussion as to the ultimate elements of life—as to whether the soul and God are one, or one and yet not one, or two, as to whether Lakshmi and Narayana together or Narayana alone forms the Godhead, and so on. Mr. Tilak has added one more to the distracting discussion of the ultimates. As a matter of fact it seems to me that the Lord has expressed himself so clearly and has given to the world such a grand synthesis that it is impossible to mistake His gracious Message. I shall endeavour in the succeeding pages to make my position quite clear and I shall at the end sum up the Lord's gracious declaration of Truth in the Bhagawad Gita.

(To be continued)

N. S's Miscellany.

1. If right to property is alone recognised and not right to labour, even that property must be in danger under the condition of individual struggle created by this non-recognition of right to labour.

2. If hereditariness is not encouraged, not only shall we lose the inherited skill, but supplies will become uncertain and the balance of supply to demand will get disturbed with the effect of bringing about social chaos.

3. They speak of communal representation. This is wrong from each of two standpoints (a) the tendency now is not to look upon any community as having a *right* to a particular labour or means of livelihood. There is also the tendency to obliterate all distinctions in customs and manners and make them externally homogeneous wholes. Thus each community must soon cease to have anything distinctive to itself which has to be guarded by legislative or executive acts. It is even a bar to unity as perpetuating divisions in a nation. (b) If, on the other hand, each community is to be an organ in the social organism responsible for some function with reference to the other organs, then too, the idea of every organ looking after itself is absurd. Once the organismal sense is established, every organ will be the ward of all the other organs. In either case therefore, communal representation has no meaning.

4. They say that the Brahmins should not be represented in the public service out of proportion to their numerical strength in the entire country's population. This is not fair. In the division of labour which is the essence of the ancient Indian polity, the Kshatriya was conceded the right to have an army through which he could not only protect the country but protect himself against people who do not pay him his tax, or try to harm him or his subjects. The other classes viz., the Vaisyas and Sudras, had land, cattle and other labour not still gone out of requisition. The Brahmin, on the other hand, lived on mental and religious labour which is of an incorporeal kind. He had no power to protect that labour or levy the remuneration of that labour, just as the king has in respect of his throne and his tax. He depended entirely on voluntary contribution and looked to the Kshatriya for his protection. His appeals were to an unseen world. However much such appeals may influence the minds of men in time of plenty, they must be absolutely fruitless and merely cries in the wilderness when the people themselves are engaged in severe individual economic struggle. At such a time, a policy of adverse protection of official labour, when that is the only resort to the Brahmins, in favour of the Non-Brahmins is extremely unfair. Further, the policy of restricting the Brahmin's entry into public life is tantamount to a proscription of the intellectual class and must be distinctly harmful to the country in the long run.

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